

From: Steve Sherry
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Accountability would be good

Being a network administrator, I have to deal with various software vendors and systems. The one thing that always stands out about Microsoft is that I hear from the company for two reasons; the first is the various security updates that always need to be applied to our system due to the result of sloppy coding. When Windows 98 was released, it was released with a huge number of known bugs in the code, if a manufacturing company released a substandard and potentially damaging system they would be taken to court to be held accountable for the damages that their indifference caused. Why should a software manufacturer be any different?

The second time that I hear from Microsoft, and this is quite regular, are phone calls concerning Marketing information or Licensing information. Never have I received a phone call asking me on what improvements that I would like to see implemented, and I would like to think that my experience as a Network Admin could be a useful tool to a company that is trying to improve their product. Being Cisco Certified, I deal with Cisco quite a bit also, and they are constantly asking for input. The major difference that myself and my fellow technicians discuss is that we wished Microsoft products worked as well as Cisco products, but the difference between the two seems to be that Cisco does one thing, but does it well, while Microsoft tries to do everything and as a result does nothing well. The best example that I can think of to demonstrate this point is that if you try to use anyones software, they usually ask you to agree with a licensing agreement. If you go to the Windows update, they ask you many times to agree to their terms. I think that Microsoft would be better off if they put as much effort into troubleshooting, testing, and releasing code that worked as they do into making sure that people are paying for it.

One last note, Microsoft's latest OS, Windows XP, is supposed to be the pinnacle of it's Windows NT and Windows 9X OS's, yet the only real improvements that have been made is some more customization of the desktop and a faster boot time. The security is awful, and all the benchmarking tests that have been performed indicate that there is almost no improvement in system performance over Windows 2000. To me, it seems as if the only aim of the Windows XP OS is to allow Microsoft the ability to cut down on pirating, but this has been done at the expense of the usability of the system since the security breaches are so bad and the fixes cause the systems to become unstable. hardly a day goes by when I do not read another story about how XP seems to cause more problems and downtime (expenses) while Microsoft continually claims that piracy costs the economy billions of dollars a year. How much money has the XP OS cost the American economy already because of bad coding by a company that only wishes to control the market.

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